

2005 Report of Accomplishments (July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005)

Pomeroy Conservation District



Most Significant Natural Resource Accomplishment

There was no single significant accomplishment this year that outweighed any others. The district has worked hard over the years to develop an ongoing process of making available the funding necessary to implement conservation practices for the improvement of water quality and sustained productivity of our agricultural resources. We continue to improve fish habitat with the implementation of riparian improvement practices through the CREP and DOE funding opportunities. We also improve water quality with the implementation of upland soil erosion reducing practices such as no-till and direct seeding with funding from BPA and the Conservation Commission. We are proud of our accomplishments over the years.



Mission of the Pomeroy Conservation District: To assist the farmers and ranchers of Garfield County with service, expertise, and funding to manage for the conservation, preservation and enhancement of the natural resources within the Pomeroy Conservation District.

Natural Resource Improvements in 2005 - Summary

- 238 acres of Direct seeding saving 1,303 tons of soil at a cost of \$1.83 per ton
- 961 acres of no-till saving 5,970 tons of soil at a cost of \$2.31 per ton
- 5 sediment basins saving 910 tons of soil at a cost of \$.40 per ton
- 84 additional acres enrolled into the CREP program.
- Additional water quality projects implemented under DOE funding.

Water Quality Implementation: The district is just finishing a Department of Ecology grant that was used to offset some of the costs associated with removing livestock winter-feeding and concentrated areas away from the stream. Over 80% of these projects were completed. It has been determined that water quality is being adversely affected by this feeding operations located adjacent to streams and the livestock operators are being asked to move these operations away from the stream corridor. These projects were not CREP eligible and had large costs outside the CREP parameters, therefore directing the district to seek funding from the DOE grant to help with the costs of providing off site watering facilities, build fence, and plant trees. An additional DOE grant has been received to continue on with this program covering a broader spectrum of activities including addressing the problem of False Indigo invading the majority of the streams in the county. It will be implemented after the other DOE grant has been utilized to its limit.

DOE Conservation Corps: The conservation district has utilized the DOE Conservation Corps in many of these projects. They constructed fence, built creek crossings, and helped install pipeline on two projects. Those were Klaveano Ranches and Beale Meadow Creek Ranches.

Basic Funding The basic funding received from the Legislature through the Conservation Commission pays for district operations not covered under grants obtained from BPA, DOE, SRFB, and others. Cost share for the implementation of practices comes from the Implementation Grant, BPA, SRGB, and DOE

Local Funding

Agricultural Burning: The Pomeroy CD works in cooperation with the Garfield County Commissioners in operating the burn program within the county. The County carries liability insurance for this program while the district works with the producer in the permit process. The county and district each contribute \$.315 per

acre into a special account to cover the deductible part of a possible future claim. During the fiscal year 05, the district issued permits for 7,876 acres of stubble, 841 acres of CRP under 89 field permits. We also sold 29 spot permits.

Water Quality Monitoring The Pomeroy CD has been involved over the last 12 years in some kind of water quality monitoring. The program of water quality monitoring is to provide information on the effectiveness of the upland and riparian practices being implemented by the farmers and ranchers within the Pomeroy CD as it pertains to the water quality of the streams in Garfield County. The Pomeroy CD has contracted with Washington State University to do water quality monitoring for the last four years with funding provided from DOE Centennial Funds. Another grant was awarded to continue with the testing program. This DOE report is available from the district.

Professional Engineering The district once again used our professional engineer, Lance Horning, in the engineering of a couple more livestock watering systems funded under the CREP and CCRP programs. He worked in cooperation with NRCS personnel.

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP): The CREP program slowed down to some degree in the district this last FY. Part of the slowdown was due to the need for Cultural Resources Survey and finding the personnel to conduct these surveys. That problem has been remedied and signups and implementation has picked up again. During FY05 the following CREP practices were implemented:

Over 8 miles of riparian fencing was constructed.

Over 4,300 trees were planted but several thousand were not planted because of the drought conditions that occurred during the spring planting season and planting was stopped.

16.38 miles of stream bank protected.

83.5 acres of additional riparian buffers

3 alternative water systems were developed.

A total of \$18,929 was spent on the district's share of Cost Share and \$22,010 was spent on Maintenance which involved weed control, fence and water system repair, and grass reseeding.

Livestock/Dairy: The livestock program under the Commission Livestock Influenced Water Quality program just got started in the county this year. \$2,921 was spent on the training of district personnel. Duane Bartels was a committee member and spent time going to meetings in Ellensburg to set up the training program for the Leavenworth training session. Currently, DOE is providing the funding to address livestock influenced water quality issues in the county with two separate grants using Centennial Clean Water Funds. An assessment will be made during the winter months to further determine the needs of the livestock producers to address their water quality issues.

Irrigation Efficiencies: Lance Horning, our area engineer, conducted two irrigation efficiency surveys. At this time he had determined that one of the two proposed projects does not meet the criteria of the irrigation efficiency program. The other project will meet the criteria but the producer is still deciding on whether to enter the program or not.

Watershed Conservation/Habitat Restoration: During the FY05 period, watershed conservation and habitat restoration were covered under the district's cost share program along with the DOE and CREP funding programs. Our district programs are geared to conserve our natural resources and restore them when necessary. The damage caused by the School Fire in Aug. of 05 will be addressed over the course of the FY 06 period and will involve the replanting of native grasses to stabilize the landscape and trees to replace those lost during the fire.

Community Collaboration & Coordination: Over the years, a steady progression has occurred with the producers and citizens living inside the Pomeroy Conservation District. In the mid 80's when some funding

became available from state and federal entities, the producers were reluctant to take part in any agreement, fearing a future conflict with a program that could change and not be of any benefit to them on their private property. Now that funding has been available for almost 15 years and the citizens and producers of Garfield County have seen what can be accomplished under these different programs, their feelings have changed. With this change in attitude, more conservation and restoration practices will be installed to protect and enhance our environment.

Marketing/Outreach & Education: The conservation district is actively involved in marketing information and education to the producers of Garfield County. Newspaper articles are written on all newsworthy information that comes through the district. The district also publishes a newsletter periodically to keep the farmers and ranchers informed of funding opportunities available through the district for practice implementation and other activities of the district. The rainfall information from the 18 stations in the county is also collected, placed in a database and published in the newsletter. The district held its annual meeting in February in cooperation with the Garfield and Asotin County Crop Improvement Association. Approximately 60 were in attendance. The conservation district operated and maintained the fish aquarium in the grade school for another year. This is the 7th year of this program in our local school. This year, over 150 trout were reared and released into a private pond.

Washington Conservation Districts assisting
land managers with their conservation choices